

Rutland Herald

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## Feds fund Springfield bridge for upgrade

SPRINGFIELD — The main bridge heading into town will finally be renovated.

Sens. Jim Jeffords and Patrick Leahy earmarked \$1 million for the Community Center Bridge as part of the federal transportation bill passed last fall, Town Manager Robert Forguites announced at Monday night's Select Board meeting.

Forguites said the money will rehabilitate the beams and replace the deck, sidewalks and railings.

Resident Woody Bickford said he hopes the renovations will be started soon, as the crumbling bridge is a major liability to the town.

"There are pieces falling into the river. Someone could fall through," he said.

The earmark will require a local match, though Forguites said he does not know yet how much that will be.

The Community Center Bridge was recently assessed by the Vermont Agency of Transportation as part of an annual review of heavily traveled bridges in town.

Town officials said the report was confusing, vague and at points did not seem correct at all.

Public Works Director Harry Henderson said some bridges were described as "reasonably good to poor" and some bridges that were rehabilitated in 1999 did not meet their standards.

"Maybe they have changed their standards on the size of nuts or bolts. I don't know," he said.

The review was not comprehensive, assessing only 15 of the town's 66 bridges.

The Park Street Bridge was listed in poor condition, which came as a

surprise to Henderson.

He said those reviewing the bridge used special equipment to assess cracks in the concrete on the underside of the bridge.

The Select Board voted to accept the reports on an agreement that the discrepancies in the report will be brought to the state's attention.